Effect of reduction of custom duty on prices of bulk drugs

1617. SHRI NYODEK YONGGAM : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) what is the set up developed in his Ministry to take decision for recommendation to reduce custom duty on bulk drugs and drug intermediates and the authority responsible for formulation of recommendation;

(b) whether it is a fact that following the reduction in custom duty consumer prices have not come down and higher foreign exchange on imports have been spent due to increase in CIF prices have gone up;

(c) what are the names of bulk drugs and formulations where prices have come down after custom duty reduction as well as the case where CIF prices have gone up ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN) : (a) to (c) There is no separate set up developed in the Ministry for formulating recommendations in regard to custom duty levels. This is ongoing and normal work of the Ministry and is accomplished with the help of the technical expertise available in the Ministry. The purpose of giving custom duty concessions on intermediates and bulk drugs is to encourage the manufacture of bulk drugs from more basic stages and also to ensure availability of medicines in abundant quantity at reasonable prices to the consumers. It is not linked necessarily in every case to reduction in the price of bulk drugs. Whenever, there is a custom duty concession on any drug/drug intermediate the reduced price is taken into account for fixing the price of bulk drugs and formulations in case of price controlled drugs. Regarding non-scheduled drugs Government keeps a watch on the movement of their prices.

Ban on Import of edible oils

1618. SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to put a ban on the import of edible oils; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Dehoarding drive of Food-grains

1619. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to pursue dehoarding drive of foodgrains like rice, wheat and oil seeds in order to arrest price rise in the country;

(b) if so, whether drive would start in centrally administered areas only; and

(c) what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) to (c) Action is taken by State Governments/U.T. Administrations under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and similar relevant legislations against persons found to be indulging in hoarding and blackmarketing of and profiteering in essential commodities. This is an on-going exercise, all over the country.

Consumer Affairs Courts in India

1620. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATARAMAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Consumer Affairs Courts established during 1991 to 1992 in the country;

(b) the number of cases filed in 1991 to 1992 and those disposed of so far and

what is the total number of cases pending; and

(c) what is the maximum amout awarded by each of these Courts State-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) to (c) The Statewise and yearwise information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House. However as on date, one National Commission at the national level, 30 State Commissions and 433 District Forums are functioning in the country.

Transfer of quota from F.P.S. to Cooperatives

1621. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that hundreds of fair price shops which were part of the Public Distribution System in Bhopal were closed down recently and their quota was transferred to cooperatives;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received any complaint about the irregularities in closing down the FPS and transferring their quota to cooperatives; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of Madhya Pradesh has reported that as per policy decision taken by the State Government all fair price shops in the State have been handed over to the cooperative societies for management w.e.f. 1-3-1992. All the fair price shops run by the private persons were closed and the cooperative societies entrusted with the work of FPSs. The State Government has established Madhya Pradesh (Khadhya Padarth) Sarvajanik Nagrik Purti Vitran Scheme, 1991 w.e.f. 1-3-1992.

(c) and (d) As reported by the State Government, there has been no irregularity in closing down the private shops.

Additional commodities under P.D.S.

1622. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to strengthen and streamline the Public Distribution System in the economically backward areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to include additional commodities like salt pulses, soap etc. for distribution by PDS outlets; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) to (d) Strengthening and streamlining of the Public Distribution System (PDS) is a continuous process. The Central Government in consultation with the State Governments/UT Administrations identified about 1700 chronically food deficit Blocks covered by various areas specific programmes to improve the reach of the PDS. Apart from the key essential commodities such as rice, wheat, levy sugar, imported edible oil and kerosene, the State Governments/UT Administrations were requested to include additional items of mass consumption taking into account the local preferences of the population. Many States/UT Administrations have reported that commodities such as tea, iodised salt, pulses, soaps, text books, spices, exercise books, matches are being distributed through the network of PDS outlets.